To benefit and empower the victim by speaking on your own behalf or your loved one's behalf.

It is important to begin preparing a thoughtful Statement <u>early</u>, use large font if you will be reading it yourself in court, and <u>practice</u> reading it out loud, if necessary. Don't be afraid of being emotional (take Kleenex if you think you might need it), visiting the courtroom in advance to familiarize yourself with the setting, asking about the order of events that will take place during the sentencing proceedings, requesting accommodations needed to exercise this right, and ensuring that the people you have chosen are available during and after your Statement to provide support. If you were involved in the incident and you have a memory of it, describing it to the Court can be impactful. Include what you felt, how you feel about the future, and the impact the crime has had on you and your family. The Statement should illustrate to the Court and the defendant the fact that an **actual person** was harmed by the crime. Consider telling the Court if it was difficult to prepare your Statement and why. Statements may be done orally in court (read by you or your representative), in written format, via technology to facilitate remote attendance if necessary, or via video, audio, or other electronic method. Discuss these parameters and any time restrictions with the prosecutor's office. Always have a Statement available in written format so that it may be placed in the offender's file to be read by the Parole Board at parole hearings.

To convey the crime's harm to the defendant and the Court.

By sharing the details of how the crime has impacted your life, the Victim Impact Statement requires the defendant to confront the human consequences of his/her actions. By discussing your emotional state, social and family relationships, your concerns for safety and security, your physical and psychological condition and the types and degrees of injuries you suffered, how long the injuries lasted or are expected to last, the amount of pain and modifications to your lifestyle you experienced as a result of the crime, any medical treatment (incurred and anticipated), you can help ensure that those in decision-making roles fully understand how the crime has affected you. The financial impact of the crime on your family and the community may also be addressed Discuss how the crime has affected you financially through lost income from work, expenses incurred for tasks which you were previously able to do yourself, loss of property, ability to earn a living, loss of support, funeral bills, and estimates of future costs.

To improve the fairness of the sentencing proceeding.

By sharing about how the crime has impacted your life and voicing your view on sentencing, you, as a victim, can play an essential role in the appropriate administration of justice by providing the Judge with information about how your life has been affected by the crime. It may be the only chance you have to address the Judge and the offender face-to-face. Often the offender's family is allowed to testify on the offender's behalf. If you choose not to provide a statement, the balance of information could be weighted in favor of the defendant.

To provide information to the sentencing body (Judge or jury).

The impact of the offense is an important consideration in determining the appropriateness of a plea agreement and sentencing. Request that the Judge or jury consider the full impact of the crime before deciding on legal consequences of the defendant's actions. Your Statement can influence the Court's decision and provide the Court with your perspective and opinion on what sentence the defendant should receive and whether restitution is owed to the victim.

Typically, the Victim Impact Statement is presented after the defendant has been found guilty or has pled guilty to the crime but before sentencing. Victim service professionals and advocates can help prepare a Victim Impact Statement. There may be parameters the prosecutor wants you to follow (for example, time limitations) and the prosecutor may wish to review your Statement before you present it in court. Therefore, making contact with the prosecutor's office regarding your Statement is highly recommended.

Prosecutor's contact information	is:	
The Judge deciding the case is:		

Many people may have access to your Victim Impact Statement, such as the Judge, prosecutor, defendant, defendant's attorney and other criminal justice professionals. Who has access to your Victim Impact Statement and whether it will become part of the court record will vary depending on the case type and practices in each county and jurisdiction. Check with the prosecutor if you have concerns regarding this issue. Do not reveal any unnecessary identifying information such as your address or phone number that you do not wish to be disclosed.

To ensure that the Victim Impact Statement follows the offender through his/her incarceration and is read by the Parole Board at each parole hearing, a copy of your Victim Impact Statement should also be sent to Department of Corrections via one of these options:

Department of Corrections 3400 Knipp Drive Jefferson City, MO 65109 573-526-6516

Fax: 573-526-2574

Email: victims@doc.mo.gov

Include the offender's name and/or inmate number on your correspondence.

Section 217.762 Presentence investigation, required, when - victim impact statement, prepared when, contents.

- 1. Prior to sentencing any defendant convicted of a felony which resulted in serious physical injury or death to the victim, a presentence investigation shall be conducted by the division of probation and parole to be considered by the court, unless the court orders otherwise.
- 2. The presentence investigation shall include a victim impact statement if the defendant caused physical, psychological, or economic injury to the victim.
- 3. If the court does not order a presentence investigation, the prosecuting attorney may prepare a victim impact statement to be submitted to the court. The court shall consider the victim impact statement in determining the appropriate sentence, and in entering any order of restitution to the victim.
- 4. A victim impact statement shall:
- (1) Identify the victim of the offense;
- (2) itemize any economic loss suffered by the victim as a result of the offense;
- (3) Identify any physical injury suffered by the victim as a result of the offense, along with its seriousness and permanence;
- (4) Describe any change in the victim's personal welfare or familial relationships as a result of the offense;
- (5) Identify any request for psychological services initiated by the victim or the victim's family as a result of the offense; and (6) Contain any other information related to the impact of the offense upon the victim that the court requires.

Plea Agreements: According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, guilty pleas in 1996 accounted for 91% of felony convictions in state courts. This figure has been consistent since 1988. When victims are permitted to provide input into plea agreements, the right is typically granted at 2 stages of the criminal justice process:

When conferring with the prosecutor during plea bargaining; and, When addressing the court, either orally or in writing, before the entry of the plea.

A victim may be given the opportunity to comment on the proposed plea at either or both of these stages, depending on the law. Consulting with the victim throughout plea bargain discussions allows the prosecutor to incorporate the victim's concerns before presenting a plea proposal to the court. This inclusion may enhance the probability that the plea agreement will meet with judicial approval. The impact of the offense is also an important consideration in determining the appropriateness of a plea agreement, and the victim can offer the court a unique perspective on the impact of the crime through the use of a Victim Impact Statement. The Victim Impact Statement can influence the court's decision to accept or reject a plea. The prosecutor's office and victim service professionals can help victims prepare and submit impact statements that are useful to the prosecutor and the court throughout the plea bargain process.

I would first like to apologize for not being able to address you personally today. Due to multiple reasons it is not possible, and so I hope you will accept this letter as a reasonable dialogue in my place.

I am sure the prosecuting attorney and the staff involved with this case have made the facts of the accident and those involved clear so I don't want to focus on the past incidents and actions. What I would like to point out are the effects of the accident, which is a word I use with contempt because it was not an accident that Mr. —— drank and intentionally drove away, on my life from May 6th —— til present. These results are compounding and all add up to a very difficult and stressful last year and a half.

The financial strain that this has put on my family has been tremendous. The subject of Mr.

leitizenship and lack of insurance has left my family and lawyer looking for any way possible to cover the bills resulting from ambulances, hospitals, surgeries, rehab, and many others. The lack of funds to cover these and reimburse me for lost wages and lost time have made the last several months very difficult. In the accident I received several injuries that still effect my everyday life. Events and things I use to do as routine fun and work are now a task that either involve caution or no participation at all. My back and knee have both received permanent damage, along with my face, eyes, and mouth that I hope will heel in time and after multiple surgeries. Even though the reports say I was conscious for most of the time I do not remember the accident at all. However the daily aches, pains, and scars all serve as a reminder that this event did take place.

I am tired of pain, I am tired of stress, and I am tired of not being able to live the life I lived before the wreck. As a former college athlete physical activity and strain use to not only be recreation but how I made money. Since the wreck, and the bone and muscle damage done, I have not been able to work any jobs that I use to make my major income at and even the jobs I do work now are difficult if I have to be on my feet for long periods of time. I can not sleep through the night because my body gets sore and stiff so I have to move around. Things like getting out of bed, getting dressed, eating, and brushing my teeth are now a thought through process. Reading is now a chore that I have to set around a schedule when my eye isn't blurred from swelling in my face. Because of the nerve damage to my mouth I can't remember many days since the wreck that I haven't tasted my own blood because my lips have no feeling and are constantly cracking.

I do not know what effect my words will have on the sentencing, but I just want to make sure that you and every one involved in this case knows that my life is no longer the same, and is not what a 26 year old athlete expects. I consider myself blessed to be alive, able to walk, able to eat without assistance, and many other things that could be taken for granite. I know that each one of us makes mistakes, Lord knows I have made plenty, and some lead to consequences that are a just and fair payment for our ignorance, and I think ignorance and genuine lack of caring has played a big role in this case. Even with the knowledge of the laws Mr. — ignored them, and has continued to ignore them. Because of the ability to see the progress of this case online I have also been able to see Mr. — lack of concern with abiding by the laws. From driving to a meeting with my lawyer on a suspended license and being pulled over again since the wreck, I think it is easy to see that Mr. — does not care about reactions to his actions. I do not want an extreme judgment, but I do hope that a just penalty will be the result. Those whom my family have talked to that were at the scene of the accident all say that the wreck could have easily resulted in a worst case scenario, and instead of a plea bargained penalty, the charges could be much worse. So I pray Mr. — will be thankful for whatever he gets as judgment knowing that it could be worse.

My biggest concern or fear is that Mr!—— will not get the sentencing that I feel he deserves. I was not made aware of a plea bargain and would not have known if it hadn't been for asking Mrs.

—I still don't know what the terms were and,I hope that in return for a faster case his judgment won't be less than what it should be. My life has been changed forever. I still have a hard time realizing that this really did happen, but as I mentioned before the results of the wreck remind me every day since it happened. I pray that as time goes by physically I can get back to where I was. The fact remains though that I am not where I was which leads to loss of money, loss of activity, and loss of what the life of a 26 year old young man is thought to be. Whatever the result of the sentencing.—

will do his time and then be done with it. As for me, the rest of my life will be effected. The scars will always be there to remind me that I almost died, and the pain will be sure to remind me of the result. Yes they will be causes for thanksgiving that God did not see it fit for my life to end at that

point, but they will be a reminder of the careless act of someone more worried about reaching a destination in a hurry than the effects he'd have on someones life.

I don't know how long I will be like this, I hope not long. Whatever the case is I can't help but have what if moments in my thoughts. What if I walk down an aisle at my wedding with a limp like I did at my brothers wedding this summer. What if it hurts to get out of bed on the first Christmas with my own child as it will this year? What if I can't pick up my own child without pain just as I couldn't pick up my cousins at Thanksgiving this year without a grimace on my face. What if I feel the same way I do right now as I write this for the rest of my life. I can't sit without wanting to stretch, turning every which way to just try and relieve the pain in my back. What if I squint to read books to my family just as I squint to see the words I am writing you in this letter. Yes all of these are what ifs, and chances are that over time most of them will become no mores, but none of these would be anymore than thoughts if this wouldn't have happened.

My day to day routine all revolves around how my body feels on that first step out of bed. At times my knees buckle as sharp pain shoots from my back to my feet. At that point I know it will be a long day and the night will be sleepless and as bad if not worse as the one I just arose from. Other times I wake and feel OK, and if it weren't for aches throughout the day and the visual reminder of scars all over I would not believe I had a wreck. I do believe it though, just as I believe tomorrow when I get up that first step is going to tell me all about my day even before it happens.

Only adding to the physical pain is the emotional and mental stress. I have been blessed with family and friends throughout this whole event. Many of them would let you know that I am not a rude or dis-respective young man. It is easy to say though that many relationships have seen aftereffects of this wreck. Because of the financial strain that this has caused and the effect of lost wages I was not able to attend the wedding of my best friend this last summer. Something that we had planned on being at for each other since before high school was missed. Even more than friends though my family can vouch for the way I act at times. Anger is a serious issue that I am having to deal with now, and just the mention of this wreck can cause me to blow up in the face of anyone asking. This makes for a very stressful time around family because this wreck is a constant talk due to the effect it has had on us all.

On top of that I now hate driving at night and if tested you could feel my heart rate jump every time; I pass a vehicle coming towards me, go around a blind corner, or go over a blind hill. These may seem like minor parts to some but to me they are major adjustments that I am having to make everyday. Where I use to never worry about a drive from town or work to my house I now think constantly about the car coming towards me and even more what if moments run through my mind. Something that was never in my mind is now a mental haunting every time a car crowds the center line or drifts in the lane.

As I write this I am back in Missouri because of Dr. Appointments. Though I was let out of school for Christmas break the plans of staying in and working were altered by those of trying to find out why my body is not healing. So again I am losing money in missing work, and in having to pay for more visits to the hospital and Dr.'s for adjustments, x-rays, and MRI's. So even a year and seven months later my life is based upon this wreck. I schedule classes, jobs, visits, and so many more things around convenient times for me to see the Dr. just to try and figure out what is wrong and when it will heal. All of this compounds to simply make my life miserable, and if it wasn't for knowing God has a reason it would stay that way.

I didn't mean to repeat myself so often and I hope that it won't seem like I am trying to overstress points that you are already aware of just for added effect. I know in the end the result lies in God's sovereignty and your judgment. So whether I think the punishment is just or not I will still thank God that I am even here to write to you. I hope I made it clear that my life will never be the same, and not in a positive form. I will always have to remember this, and every May 5th and 6th I will be reminded of what happened and so many more times than just on those days. Time will pass and who knows how my body, mind, and life will react? None of that can be written in stone and it will all be uncertain guessing only revealed day by day. What is certain though and I can engrave into stone is that because of this wreck my life will never ever be what it should be, and until each day is over and each moment has passed everyday will start with a very revealing first step. With the ever present thought of what if, what if today is just as bad as the day before?

Thank you for taking the time to listen to this. I again apologize for not being able to be present. I ask that you take everything I said into consideration and will arrive at a just payment for the actions

Sample of A VICTIM IMPACT STATEMENT

Victim's statement to Name

I am a cycle breaker. I was raised by alcoholic parents. I never realized that my family was dysfunctional or that the many relational skills I learned a child were abnormal. My mother's drinking was out of control by the time I was a junior in high school so I entered adulthood never seeing a solid, caring marriage. All I saw was a mess. As a result my relationships were also messy. In my early 20's I got a phone call from my Father saying Mom had checked herself into a treatment facility. She didn't have a choice. It was either go willingly or be forced. (Spouses had the power to commit their loved ones into treatment in those days.) It was several days before Mom was permitted to call home. When she did, my Father was having a party and was drunk. That was essentially the end of their 25 yr. marriage. As I look back, all they had in common was drinking (and of course, two children). The relationship with my Father was irretrievably broken. I have no idea whether he ever entirely stopped drinking. He remarried and her children became his, leaving my brother and me wondering why.

It's affected everything in my life. The way I deal with people, disappointment, stress, physical and emotional hurt. I've made steps to tear down those unhealthy habits and responses. I'm not perfect, but I'm better and I continue to try.

My injuries were not life threatening. My sternum was fractured, I had internal and external bruising and my rt. leg was gashed and required staples. My lower right leg and foot turned black and swelled to the point I thought my skin would tear. For several months I found it difficult to breathe deeply, lift, reach and twist. I re-injured myself a number of times helping hame. Discomfort is still a part of my day to day life.

wasn't just injured, this accident left him with catastrophic and life changing injuries. The injuries to wasn't just injuried, this accident left him with catastrophic and life changing injuries. The injuries to wasn't just injuried, the left him with catastrophic and life changing injuries. The injuries to wasn't just injuried, this wasn't j

Being the sole support for our family meant that I had to find people to stay with Nank while I was working. He was virtually helpless and it was three months before he could try to bear weight on either of his legs. More than this, I fought for the best medical care. I argued with social services and home health care. I dealt with insurance agents and adjusters and did financial paperwork and bill paying. I kept in contact with the doctors, victim advocates, and attorneys. It has been a tough year, to say the least.

Let me step backward again. The story of my alcoholic parents is not complete. Following treatment, my Mom began to attend AA meetings and met a man named — . They married and for the very first time, I watched as they treated each other with love, dignity and respect. They didn't always agree but they talked it out calmly sometimes just agreeing to disagree. I'd never seen that! They spent 20 years happily married. — became Dad to my brother and me. And when Mom died 13 years ago, she had been sober 22 years. Two years later, my husband of 18 years died unexpectedly. My last words to him before leaving that morning were mean and sarcastic. I had watched Mom and Beck but I hadn't learned. I became a single parent of teenagers, never expecting to marry again. When Nano- and I met, I knew our lives together HAD to be different and it was.

What did this accident take away from me? It might be easier to list what it hasn't. A beautiful, happy, fulfilling life together was nearly taken away by your decision to drive drunk but there was more. Eight months earlier in September of 2009, — (Dad to me) was diagnosed with lymphoma. By the night of May —, he was losing his battle and I was his primary caregiver. I was so worn out. I planned to care for him until the end ... convinced that we would not have to place him in a nursing home. As a result of the accident, he did have to go to a nursing home and although I traveled to — often to see him, he died, alone, on November — this 36 year sobriety coin on his bedside.

I can't think of a single way you could pay us back for the continuing loss of income, the pain and suffering or the time I lost with my Dad.

Offender's

Name, you have no idea what a sweet person Name is. He has endured 4 major surgeries since the accident. There have been many nights that he has been unable to sleep, the pain so severe that even the strongest drugs don't help. And what does he say to me? With tear stained cheeks he says that his injuries are so unfair to me!! He is now disabled, unable to go back to the job he loved, unable to work at all due to his physical limitations. The doctors say that will feel pain every day that that he lives on this earth. There is another surgery down the road, our dreams of retiring and spending winters walking along the beach barefooted now marred by wheelchairs, walkers, crutches and canes.

Differeder's Warre, my faith says to forgive. It's more difficult than I EVER imagined. We know your parents and grandparents, your brother and sister. They are sweet and kind people. You and our children were classmates. I am convinced that hanging onto anger only hurts me, so every day when I wake up and you come to mind, and you always do, I force myself to forgive you again and again. Maybe one day it will become easier.

By telling you my story, maybe you'll see that we have more in common than you guessed. I've seen the lives of people I love both destroyed and transformed. You can't change your past but you can work to improve your future. What Name and I hang onto is this, plain and simple. God spared our lives on May — but He spared yours, too.

The law says you need to pay for your crime, but one day, you'll walk away from whatever sentence you receive today. This is not the end of your story. Maybe you will be a cycle breaker, too.

Trial Judge, Summit County Courthouse Adams, Alexandria XXXXX

SAmple VICTIM
IMPACT STATEMENT

Your Honor:

We are writing you this letter because it is your responsibility to sentence Matt Farner, the drunk driver who killed our son, Michael Brock.

We would like to tell you some things about our son. Michael was not the most gifted student in school, not the most popular nor the smartest and not the best athlete. What was noticeable about him was that he never gave up on things. He made the most of life and encouraged others by demonstrating that you could succeed at most things by just not giving up. You would have liked him, everyone who met him did. Michael will not graduate college this year. He will not marry. He will not have children or a career. He will never again read a book, write a letter or laugh with friends. He will not be here for his birthday, for Christmas or for any more Thanksgivings. Michael's life-force, his love and energy have all been involuntarily sacrificed to Matt Farner's self-centered and self-indulgent appetite for alcohol.

We have been told that Mr. Farner is an important banker in your community, a man of wealth and influence. We expect that many people will rally to help Mr. Farner persuade you in your sentencing decision. While these people will have only known Mr. Farner as their banker or in some other positive role, we know him as a coward and a criminal--a robber and a killer. He has robbed us of our precious son; he has robbed our other children of their brother; and he has robbed Michael of the rest of his life. If someone of Farner's age, intelligence and life experience robbed Mr. Farner's own bank or caused the death of one of his bank employees while robbing his bank, a judge would be urged to impose a sentence that would outlast the robber's life.

We request that you sentence Matt Farner, the man who robbed our world of Michael's life, to the maximum term of imprisonment possible. Not only would this sentence be entirely justified, based on the facts, but from a broader perspective it is our belief that many potential drunk driver-killers would read and weigh their personal risk, realizing that what happened to a person of Farner's wealth and power could happen to them. The countless lives saved as a direct result of your imposing such an important sentence would be living memorials to the righteousness of the laws against drunk driving, to your courage and wisdom as a Judge, and to our son's tragedy which presently stands as just another isolated and meaningless highway death.

Before you decide what you will do in this case, ask yourself whether you will ever have any greater opportunity to enhance the quality of human life, serve the aims of justice, and fulfill your calling as a Judge, than when you sentence Matt Farner.

Sincerely,

Sample

Glen and Martha Brock

I am BRAVE! I am a VICTIM who has stood up to Domestic Violence!

I. INTRODUCTION

- Your honor, my name is XXX.
- I currently just completed my Spring Semester at XXX
- I am currently employed with XXX
- The Defendant and I were engaged in an on and off relationship since XXX
- From that relationship I have Mothered 3 children XXX of which the Defendant, XXX, has also fathered

<u>I AM HERE SO THAT THE FULL IMPACT OF THE CRIME IS BROUGHT TO YOUR ATTENTION YOUR HONOR.</u>

II. HISTORY OF ABUSE

- Due to the long history of abuse and this incident that has brought us to court today, I would like the plea vacated so that the Defendant, XXX, may answer to the Domestic Violence charge.
- I don't believe that the plea here holds him accountable for what he has done
- I have feared and continue to fear for my life because of the Defendant, XXX's unpredictable behavior.
- This fear stems from a long history of Domestic Violence.
- My children and I have been endured hurt and pain for many years from incidents that included:
 - ✓ Being thrown around and forcefully held against my will
 - ✓ Kicked with steel toe boots
 - ✓ Called derogatory names over and over
 - ✓ Going down the freeway at high speeds & him trying to push me out
 - ✓ Had my vehicle keys, wallet, money, cell phone taken by him over and over
 - Has destroyed the children and I's property on numerous occassions
 - ✓ He has also been economically abusive and I've had to seek food from the food bank
 - ✓ He has charged at me & his fists stopped one inch from my face.
 - ✓ He has attacked me where I had to seek medical attention & iv acquire xrays to learn of how physically damaging this abuse has been
- This incident that occurred on XXX, has been very damaging to my children and I.
- My children has been present and witness to most of these incidents because his behavior is very unpredictable.

I AM ASKING YOUR HONOR, THAT THE PLEA BE VACCATED SO THAT HE MAY BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR HIS ACTIONS AND ANSWER TO THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CHARGE.

III. IF PLEAS IS NOT VACCATED, to protect me and my children the sentence MUST include:

A. A NO CONTACT order for me and my children as part of the probation.

- My children and I need this time to continue to heal from the long history of Domestic Violence and most recently the incident that brought us here today.
- My children and I continue to have nightmares and we are currently attending counseling.
 - My X year old daughter/son wakes in the middle of the night crying saying, "My dad hurt me again, I never thought my dad would do this to me. I thought my dad loved me."
 - ✓ My X year old, feels that s/he has been let down because the man whose supposed to support and teach him/her is nothing like the person s/he wants to be.
 - ✓ When my X year old sees me crying s/he says, "Mom did dad hurt you again?" That's always his/her first question.
 - ✓ The damage it has caused me is an everyday struggle. It has been emotionally, psychologically, physically and financially damaging damaging. It has affected our everyday living and my education in particular. I've had to withdraw from classes because I was unable to focus because I was being abused. I've had to make several doctor's visits because of the illnesses and physical damage related to Domestic Violence as well.

A NO CONTACT order for myself and my children would further protect us and help us heal after the long history of Domestic Violence

B. In Addition Your Honor, probation must include:

- Restitution for myself and my children
- This crime has left us displaced
- The Defendant should be ordered to pay Restitution so we may be whole again:
- The Defendant and I had a mutual agreement, it allowed our children and I to live in a stable environment here in XXX so that I may attend XXX as a full time student to complete the XXX program. I supported his career on the road and I asked him to support mine, he agreed.
- We entered into a lease and moved in to a home on XXX and he said not to worry about anything that it would be taken care of.
- This day in XXX was an upheaval and left us displaced. Our lease was broken and I had to seek funds to move out and pay for storage.
- My children and I need this restitution to get us back on our feet.
- Our total living expenses at XXX totaled about \$XXX per month and Restitution should be in this amount for the duration of his probation.
- Probations must also include \$XXX immediately so that we may get a place to call home.

As mother, we always want the best for our children, our children never ask to be born into a Domestic violence.